Chapter 2 notes

Autism (Athabasca University)

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Chapter 2

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1. **Increase awareness of evidence-based practices for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders.**
2. **Increase awareness of unestablished practices and fad treatments.**
3. **Compare and contrast focused interventions with comprehensive treatment models.**
4. **Identify the components of effective instruction for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders.**
5. **Identify ways of determining effective treatment for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders.**

1- Increase awareness of evidence-based practices for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders:

- Also referred to as scientific based practices
- Funded the National Professional Development Centre (NPDC) to identify and promote the use of EBPs with infants, children, and youth with autism
- National Autism Centre published a comprehensive literature review titled the National Standards Report (NSP)
- Many practices identified in the NSP are treatment package
- NPDC identified focus interventions, defined as practices or strategies that teachers and other practitioners use to teach specific educational targets- skills and concepts- to children with ASD
- NPDC has currently identified 24 EBPs, and two subgroups were created including behavioral teaching strategies (based on the principles of applied behaviour analysis-ABA and positive behavioural support-PBS)

2- Increase awareness of unestablished practices and fad treatments:

- The NAC on ASDs identified five practices as unestablished treatments (academic interventions, auditory integration training, facilitated communication, gluten- and casein-free diets, and sensory integrative package)
- These treatments have little or no evidence to support their use, and there is no reason to assume that these practices are effective/but we can't rule out the possibility that these treatments are ineffective or harmful

3- Compare and contrast focused interventions with comprehensive treatment models:

- Many focused intervention strategies are designed to teach specific skills or reduce interfering behaviours
  Example: prompting, reinforcement, task analysis, time delay, extinction, functional behaviour, differential reinforcement, etc

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- A comprehensive treatment model (CTM) is an intervention approach that consists of a set of practices designed to achieve a broader learning of developmental impact on the core deficits of ASD
- CTMs are known as *branded interventions* as they are often associated with a name or acronym
  Example: Lovaas Model, TEACCH, STAR
- They require an extended period of time for intervention, more than one year, and they are applied with intensity and contain multiple components

4- Identify the components of effective instruction for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders:

- Answers for this question are a bit mixed up with number 5
- Promoting the principles of self-determination, independence, normalization, and functionality
- Self-determined individuals are able to make choices, make decisions about their actions, set goals for themselves, recognize their own abilities (strengths and needs), and advocate for themselves
- Independence is achieved when one uses only those supports that are absolutely necessary for functioning
- Normalization occurs when the activities, materials, and settings in which a person engages are the same as those in which persons without disabilities of the same age, gender, and culture are engaged
- A skill is said to be functional when someone has to do the skill for the child if the child cannot do it himself, in other words, a skill is considered functional only if it is something the child actually needs to be able to do in his everyday life in the natural environment
- So for example, if a child has low functioning autism and her therapist wants her to work on her pincer grip (used to pinch and pick up items) she would invent a game where the child has to use her pincer grasp to put clothes on a clothespin

5- Identify ways of determining effective treatment for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders:

- The decision regarding the skills to be taught, and the best method through which to teach them, should be based on a valid and up-to-date assessment as well as on the wants and needs of the individual child and family
- One cannot know the effectiveness of any instructional approach, no matter how well documented in the research, unless data are collected and analyzed regarding its use within the framework of an individualized instructional program
- Once skills have been mastered, they should be systematically revisited to ensure they are maintained across time. Systematic generalization of skills must be planned in advance to ensure that such generalization of skills will occur
- The treatment is currently a challenge for teachers and families alike, the selection and implementation of an intervention may look different for each child in need of services
- It is necessary to conduct research in several areas to gain insight into the utility and effectiveness of the selected intervention package

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